

## COMMISSION MINUTES

September 11, 2013

A meeting of the City of Fitchburg Water / Wastewater Commission was held on September 11, 2013 at the JA Provincial Building, 1200 Rindge Rd, Fitchburg, MA.

The meeting commenced at 4:35 p.m.

Members present:     Lenny Laakso, Commissioner DPW  
                               Rick Healey  
                               George Siener  
                               Michael McLaughlin  
                               Carol Brown  
                               Ron Lubianez

Members Absent:     None

Others present:

                               Denis Meunier, Deputy Commissioner Water  
                               Joseph Jordan, Deputy Commissioner W.W.

### **ITEM # 1: Approval of last meetings minutes:**

The minutes for the July 10, 2013 meeting were approved by unanimous vote.

### **ITEM # 2: Public Forum:**

No forum comments were received.

### **ITEM # 3: Water Division:**

- **Staffing and On-Call Contract:** Mr. Meunier informed the Commission that he had received approval to fill two vacant distribution positions in the Department. Two internal candidates that currently work for DPW Streets have been interviewed. At this time it appears that both candidates will be offered positions. The Water Division will coordinate with Commissioner Laakso on the timing of the transfers to minimize any disturbance in work flow within the DPW. Mr. Meunier also reported that two temporary employees were hired at the end of the summer and will stay on through October doing watershed maintenance and hydrant maintenance. Mr. Meunier reported that the, long delayed, contract for an on-call contractor has been finalized. RJ Pacella Co. will provide on-call distribution system repairs for both planned and emergency work within the Water Division.
- **Ashby Compensating Reservoir Dam Repairs:** The planned maintenance project to repair two depressed area on the crest of the Ashby Compensating Reservoir Dam is underway and will be completed by the end of the week.

- **Reclassification of Mare Meadow and Bickford Dams:** Mr. Meunier reported that the, State Office of Dam Safety, after reviewing inspection reports and dam hydraulic data has determined that the classification for both Mare Meadow Reservoir Dam and the Bickford Reservoir Dam will be upgraded from “significant hazard to “high hazard”. This change in classification will require that each dam have an “Emergency Action Plan” prepared detailing the actions that would be taken in the case of a dam failure. In addition, each structure will require more frequent inspections. This additional effort and reporting will come with an additional cost for each dam. The Water Division is, at this time, investigating what those costs will be.
- **Petition to abandon easement on land abutting Mare Meadow Reservoir:** Mr. Meunier informed the Commission that he had been contacted by a Mr. Duane Winter regarding a parcel of land that Mr. Winter owns abutting Mare Meadow Reservoir on Davis Rd in Westminster. Mr. Winter is attempting to sell this parcel. A review of the deed determined the parcel contains an easement over the land belonging to the City of Fitchburg. Mr. Winter has petitioned the City to abandon this easement in an effort to make the parcel more saleable. Mr. Meunier asked the Commission to review the issue and to recommend a course of action relative to this petition. The Commission vote will be made known to the City Council at an upcoming Property Committee Meeting to assist in there deliberation on this matter. After a lengthy discussion on this matter a motion was made and seconded to support the petition at City Council with the added stipulation that the Commission would recommend that only one dwelling could be constructed on the subject parcel. The motion carried by unanimous vote.

#### **Item #4: Wastewater Division:**

- **General Department Update:** Mr. Jordan updated the Commission on several ongoing projects as follows:
  1. Chemically Enhanced Primary Treatment (CEPT) upgrade at the East WW Treatment Facility is up and running. Plant personnel are working to fine tune the process and optimize chemical feed.
  2. CSS-3 Project in the Water Street area nearly complete. All pipes in the ground contractor working on manhole rehab. and miscellaneous pipe lining. Result of the separation project appears to be a nearly 1.0 million gallon per day reduction in flow at the plant. City collection crew sealed up open manhole and pipe in the Nashua River near Kimball St. Bridge further reducing extraneous flow to the plant.
  3. Completing final design of second stage aeration and clarifier system at the East Plant. When completed all of the major operating systems at the plant will have been rebuilt.
  4. CSS-4, Summer St. /Boutelle St corridor, construction contract issued to Revoli Construction. Work to start before the end of September. Discussion regarding parameters for winter work. If all goes as planned CSS-4 will be last major sewers separation project required to meet consent order limits.
  5. Brief discussion regarding plans for East Plant Incinerator and building space. Mr. Jordan would like to demo the incinerator and convert space to offices, record keeping, and meeting space.

- **Status of Anaerobic Digestion at West Wastewater Treatment Facility:** Mr. Jordan update the Commission on status of efforts to study the feasibility of converting the West Plant to an anaerobic digestion treatment facility. The process would digest and treat Fitchburg sludge and sludge from other communities. The study is being conducted using a \$60,000 grant from the, MA Clean Energy Commission, and will be completed in two phases. The first phase will investigate the feasibility and potential for business of the project. If the feasibility study is positive a conceptual design would be completed. As part of the study public outreach meetings will be conducted with City Commissions and Boards as well as an open meeting for the public to solicit comments and reactions.
- **Other Business:**
- Mr. Jordan updated the Commission on the status of the, Supplemental Environmental Project, required by Consent Order, to stabilize stream banks along Baker Brook in the vicinity of Coolidge Park and the Civic Center.
- Mr. Meunier passed out copies of a report submitted by Ms. Ashley Howard that studied the relative affordability of water and sewer rates in Fitchburg and the potential for alternative sources of revenue for the Enterprise Funds. Ms. Howard conducted this study as a project towards a graduate degree at Clark University in Worcester. The Commission will discuss the report at a later date.

The next meeting is scheduled for October 9, 2013 at 4:30 pm at the Water Office.

The meeting adjourned at 6:00 PM

Minutes Prepared by: \_\_\_\_\_  
Denis Meunier